

FEBRUARY 2006



MONTANA GEAR UP

GAINING EARLY AWARENESS & READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

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GEARUP



Director's Message by Sandy Merdinger

The big news in the GEAR UP office is the birth of Cyrus and Megan Malkin's baby, Aria, on January 25th. Congratulations to Cy and his family! We wish them all the best as their family grows. In order to spend some time with Aria, Cyrus will be out of the office the first week in February, so please direct your calls or emails to others in the office.

Beyond celebrating Aria's birth, we are pleased to announce that Montana GEAR UP will partner with the Student Assistance Foundation to help pilot College Summit in Montana. College Summit is designed to navigate the gap between high school and college for students that are "better than their numbers" but need some extra support to get into college and to stay in college. There was a positive response when College Summit staff presented information about the program in Havre in early January. Representatives from six GEAR UP schools attended and some are interested in participating in the pilot program. We will keep you posted on the program as we see how College Summit can be effectively rolled out in a rural state like Montana.

On the national level, the U.S. Department of Education just announced a new competition for GEAR UP funding. We encourage postsecondary institutions and schools not already a part of a GEAR UP program to consider coming together and submitting a partnership proposal. The deadline for applications for the six-year grant is March 7th. As you might imagine, we've seen great success in many of the GEAR UP schools, so we hope others will also become involved in GEAR UP. If you have any questions about the new round of funding or questions on writing a proposal, please feel free to contact our office.

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OPI Indian Education Division Fully Staffed!

Superintendent of Public Instruction Linda McCulloch is pleased to announce the full staffing of the OPI Indian Education Division. Due to funding in the 2005 Legislative session, the Indian Education Division is expanding from one Indian Education Specialist to a team of eight individuals. Denise Juneau, Lynn Hinch, Mike Jetty, Martha Many Gray Horses, Mandy Smoker Broadus, Amy Sings In The Timber, Cal Boyle, and Joan Franke bring a wide range of experience but a common vision in the area of Indian Education.



The Indian Education Division is dedicated to an equal and quality education for all Montana students and is especially grateful for the diligent efforts of those who have worked in and advocated for Indian Education throughout the years in Montana.

The Indian Education Division has two major functions. First, the group will work to promote and uphold Montana's constitutional mandate of Indian Education for All, which requires that ALL Montanans learn about the "distinct and unique heritage of American Indians" (MCA 20-1501). Second, the Division works to improve the academic experience for American Indian students, including working to close the achievement gap that exists between Indian and non-Indian students, decreasing drop-out rates, and creating culturally responsive curriculum and school environments that promote success.

The Indian Education Division works in conjunction with educators, school districts, state and tribal organizations, and state agencies to improve education for all Montana students.

The GEAR UP Spotlight: Arlee Schools

...Arlee is off and RUNNING!! by Tammy Elser, GEAR UP Liaison



Arlee Schools are proud to be a new participant in Montana GEAR UP, and we looking forward to the next six years of academic enrichment, college awareness, and new scholarship opportunities for our talented students. GEAR UP helps us build on the many initiatives we began over the past few years, modeled off GEAR UP principles. One initiative, which is now a part of our implementation plan, is our annual Buttercup Scholarship Run! This year, the race will be held on Saturday, March 25th, and it has been officially renamed in honor of a master teacher and treasured colleague: Ted Hesse, who died of cancer on December 7th, 2005.

Mr. Hesse served for nearly 30 years as a first grade teacher and taught hundreds of Arlee students to read. In addition, he mentored dozens of student teachers over the past 20 years. Our community partners, the Friends of Arlee Schools, decided that there was no more fitting way to honor Ted than to name the scholarships we will award to deserving Arlee graduates after him. He gave them a great start in their academic pursuits as 6 year olds, and now, in his honor, **they will be attending college!** There is no doubt he would be very proud.

We want to invite students from other GEAR UP schools to participate in our annual run. As this is our area's first race of the spring, we encourage everyone to dress warm, prepared for sun, rain, or as is often the case....snow! More information and registration forms can be downloaded from our website, www.geocities.com/btrcuprun. Cost for students is \$15, which includes a t-shirt, or \$8 for no shirt. All proceeds go to providing scholarships for as many as 10 Arlee graduates of the class of 2006. We hope to see you there!



February Reminders

- 2005 GEAR UP graduate surveys were due January 13, 2006 for 1999 Grantees.
- Online student survey completion deadline was January 25, 2006.
- Winter Liaisons Meeting is January 31—February 1, 2006 in Helena.
- Essay contest submissions are due February 1st. For more information, contact Tina Wagner at (406) 444-0350 or twagner@mgsip.state.mt.us.
- College Goal Sunday is February 12th, 2006. Check out www.collegegoalmt.org for more information.
- The 2006 Title I Conference is February 14-16 in Billings. To register online, or for more information, visit <http://btc.montana.edu/titleone/>. Montana GEAR UP will sponsor up to three (3) from each GEAR UP school.
- GEAR UP Spring/Summer 2006 Professional Development Opportunities schedule is available on the GEAR UP website (www.gearup.montana.edu).
- Spotlight articles for the March newsletter are due February 17th and can be sent to Cyrus Malkin at cmalkin@oche.montana.edu.
- This newsletter can also be viewed on our website (www.gearup.montana.edu).
- If you know of anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, send his or her information to Cyrus Malkin at cmalkin@oche.montana.edu.



Free Admission to the Museum of the Rockies!

For the first time ever, school groups from across the state of Montana will be admitted free to the Museum of the Rockies thanks to generous donations from individuals and corporations. The donated funds will also be used to establish a scholarship fund that will subsidize bus transportation costs that schools may incur.

The Museum of the Rockies was founded in 1957, by Dr. Caroline McGill, a Butte physician, as her gift to all the people of Montana. It is committed to preserving and interpreting the natural and cultural history of the region. "We feel strongly that our exhibits and collections need to be accessible in order to educate children about their heritage," said Museum Dean Sheldon McKamey, "The museum is incredibly grateful to the donors that made this possible because free admission will make a visit to the museum far more feasible for schools,"



In order to take advantage of the free admission, schools simply have to call the museum's education office at (406) 994-6618 to make reservations. All trips for schools groups can include guided tours, planetarium shows, the living history farm, and the Lewis & Clark challenge course, but schools must prearrange which features of the museum they want to visit.

Montana GEAR UP Note: Museum staff would love to host Montana GEAR UP schools, and they ask that they have three weeks' notice to set up a great visit. The museum is especially busy in May, so advance notice is very important if schools wish to visit in May.

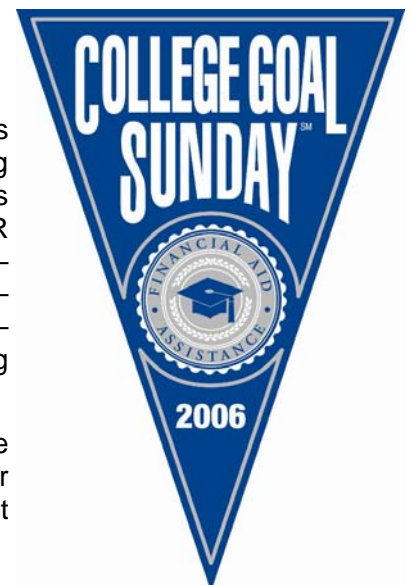
MIEA Spring Conference—March 30-April 2, 2006

The Montana Indian Education Association celebrates 25 years at its Spring Conference on March 30- April 2, 2006. Montana GEAR UP is proud to once again help sponsor this conference, entitled *Creating Change, Eliminating Barriers, Building Successful Programs – 25 Years of Indian Education*. Attending this year's conference will be a great way to celebrate the many positive changes in Indian Education. As stated in a recent memo from the MIEA Board of Directors, "We cannot nor should we forget our history – it is who we are and what sustains us in our work to give every Indian child the hope and opportunities for success. When we are united in this effort, we can make a difference." The MIEA 2006 conference will be held at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center. Montana GEAR UP will support up to four staff members from each of our schools to attend this conference. This support will include conference registration, mileage, per diem meals, and substitute teacher costs. For a list of other professional development opportunities supported by Montana GEAR UP, contact Linda Safty, School Grant Manager, at (406) 444-0848, or visit our website at www.gearup.montana.edu.

College Goal Sunday Reminder!!

Don't forget about College Goal Sunday, February 12th, from 1:00 to 4:00!! This is an excellent opportunity for your high school seniors (and early graduating juniors) to complete their Free Application for Student Financial Aid (FASFA). This year, College Goal Sunday will be offered in many locations accessible to GEAR UP schools, including the following: Flathead Valley Community College—Kalispell; Blackfeet Community College—Browning; Salish Kootenai College—Pablo; Carroll College—Helena; University of Montana—Missoula; MSU—Northern; MSU—Great Falls College of Technology; MSU—Billings; Little Big Horn College—Crow Agency; Chief Dull Knife College—Lame Deer; and others!

Students can pre-register for College Goal Sunday online and find more information, including important information to bring, at www.collegegoalmt.org, or you can call Libby Siebens at the Student Assistance Foundation at (406) 495-7392.





youth leadership summit 2006



Montana GEAR UP Note:

Last year, Box Elder student Ashley Haley was selected as a Youth Leadership Summit scholar. Ashley said she had a wonderful time, and Montana GEAR UP strongly encourages students entering 10th, 11th, or 12th grade next year to submit an application. Best of luck!

In an effort to include student-centered perspectives and the opinions of youth in the education reform debate, the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships and Booz Allen Hamilton Inc. (www.bah.com) have joined together to present the Youth Leadership Summit 2006. The Summit provides opportunities for high school students to participate in a wide range of activities at the NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference in Washington, DC from July 22–26, 2006. During the summit, the youth leaders will participate in a broad range of activities, including conference plenary sessions, student forums, and leadership development training. Their experience will culminate in the preparation and oral presentation of a report to be issued during the final luncheon plenary session of the conference.

This year, 30 GEAR UP high school students and four alumni will be selected to participate in the 2006 Youth Leadership Summit. The competitive application process requires each youth applicant to submit an essay, formal application, academic transcripts, letters of reference, and a parental permission form. For additional information, please visit the NCCEP web site (www.edpartnerships.org), or contact Marie Hughes at (202) 530-1135 or via e-mail at marie_hughes@edpartnerships.org.

Booz | Allen | Hamilton



National Council
for Community
and Education
Partnerships

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Montana GEAR UP website:
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Montana Guaranteed Student Loan
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National GEAR UP website:
www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/

National Council for Community &
Education Partnerships (NCCEP) site:
www.edpartnerships.org/